



County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

425 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, California 90020
(213) 351-5602

ANTONIA JIMÉNEZ
Acting Director

Board of Supervisors
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Fifth District

December 30, 2010

To: Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Mayor
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: Antonia Jiménez
Acting Director

**NOTIFICATION OF EXECUTION OF CONTRACT FOR CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND
EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED CHILDREN
PROGRAM**

This letter is to notify your Board that I have used Board delegated authority to execute the Child Abuse Prevention and Early Intervention Program for Developmentally Disabled Children, to provide for the two year Demonstration Project for addressing Child Abuse Prevention and Early Intervention Services for Developmentally Disabled Children in Supervisorial District I, in accordance with Board letter submitted by the Inter-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN) and approved by your Board on July 21, 2009 (see attached).

If you have any questions or need additional information, you may call me at (213) 351-5600 or your staff may contact Armand Montiel, Board Liaison, at (213) 351-5530.

AJ:KF:CC:ec

Attachment (1)

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

INTER-AGENCY COUNCIL ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

County of Los Angeles



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JOHN WAGNER
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Chief Deputy Secretary, California Department
of Corrections and Rehabilitation

DIAPHNA ZIMAN
Appointee, Board of Supervisors

June 23, 2009

HONORABLE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
County of Los Angeles
383 Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

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JULY 21, 2009

Dear Supervisors:

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT PREVENTION, INTERVENTION, AND TREATMENT FUNDING (AB 2994 SURPLUS CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND) ALL SUPERVISORAL DISTRICTS (3 Votes)

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Approve funding allocations from surplus funds available through AB 2994 for four programs:
 - \$115,800/year for two years for a Demonstration Project for a Family Visitation Center and Safe Child Custody Exchange Program in Supervisorial District III;
 - \$103,000 for one year and \$109,000 for a second year for a two-year Demonstration Project for a Family Visitation Center and Safe Child Custody Exchange Program in Supervisorial District V;
 - \$100,000/year for two years for a Demonstration Project to provide Services for Recently Emancipated Foster Youth Between the Ages of 18 and 24 who are Pregnant and Have Young Children in Supervisorial District II;
 - \$100,000/year for two years for a Demonstration Project for addressing Child Abuse Prevention and Early Intervention Services for Developmentally Disabled Children in Supervisorial District I.



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County of Los Angeles



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2. Authorize the Director of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to enter into contractual agreements with **Friends of the Family(FOF) and Grace Resource Center (GRC)** for the Family Visitation Center and Safe Child Custody Exchange Programs; **Gramercy Housing Group (GHG)** for the Services for Recently Emancipated Foster Youth Between the Ages of 18 and 24 who are Pregnant or Have Young Children Program; and **Alma Family Services** for the Child Abuse Prevention and Early Intervention Project for Developmentally Disabled Children.

All of these Programs are 2-year demonstration projects that can be expedited through the execution of contracts with DCFS. In addition, all of these programs are specialized programs that were identified and recommended by the Board offices for each of the Districts to be served.

BACKGROUND

In 1982, the Governor of California signed into law two bills aimed at preventing and treating child abuse and neglect. The first bill, Assembly Bill (AB) 1733/Papan (Chapter 1398, Statutes of 1982), authorized the allocation of state funding to counties for child abuse prevention and intervention services offered by public and private, non-profit agencies.

The second law, AB 2994/Imbrecht (Chapter 1399, Statutes of 1982), established a County Children's Trust Fund for the purpose of funding child abuse and neglect prevention and intervention programs operated by private, nonprofit organizations. AB 2994 requires that \$4.00 of any fee for a certified copy of a birth certificate shall be paid to a County Children's Trust Fund.

Both of these laws provide that a designated multi-disciplinary child abuse council shall develop and recommend funding priorities to the Board of Supervisors. In Los Angeles County, the designated child abuse council is the Inter-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN).



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Review Process

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) has the responsibility for monitoring the amount of funds available through the Children's Trust Fund established by AB 2994. DCFS notified ICAN that there was a surplus in the fund. (Please see attached spread sheet indicating the anticipated surplus amount). As noted, this legislation clearly states that these funds can only be given to a private nonprofit organization for the purpose of identifying, preventing and treating child abuse and neglect.

As with all proposals that come to ICAN through AB 1733 or AB 2994, ICAN engaged in a very serious and lengthy process to review and evaluate these proposals. The proposals were first presented to ICAN's Operations Committee to determine if there was multi-disciplinary support for these programs. Once the Operation's Committee indicated support for the proposals, ICAN formed a special Ad Hoc Group comprised of members from numerous County and City agencies including the Department of Children and Family Services, District Attorney, Public Defender, Probation Department, Department of Public Social Services, Department of Health Services, Los Angeles County Office of Education, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, Los Angeles City Attorney's Office and the Community Child Abuse Councils.

This Ad Hoc Group held face-to-face meetings and engaged in an extensive process of emails and phone calls to vet these proposals so that any concerns regarding the proposals could be addressed, and to reach consensus regarding recommending approval for funding the programs. During this process, the Ad Hoc Group made some significant improvements to the proposals.

ICAN staff then prepared an Action Item (attached to this letter) voted on at the April 30, 2009 ICAN Policy Committee meeting to obtain approval for the four proposals. The Policy Committee unanimously approved allocating the requested funds for all of these programs.



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ICAN is now seeking your Board's approval for the special allocations of surplus AB 2994 funds for these four programs.

RECOMMENDED PROGRAMS

Family Visitation Center and Safe Child Custody Exchange Programs

Two of the proposals are connected and will be implemented in two separate supervisorial districts through two linked non-profit community based agencies, **Friends of the Family in District III and Grace Resource Center in District V.**

The first program is for Family Visitation Centers to be located at local churches where meaningful visits can take place between children in out-of-home care and their birth parents in a safe, child and family friendly environment. The centers will be a place where the birth parents can have monitored, supervised, visitation with their children in a setting that is conducive to parent/child interaction.

The second program is a Safe Child Custody Exchange Program designed to assist parents in the transfer of their children from one to the other for visitation and/or custody. The program provides a safe environment within which custody exchanges can be done peacefully and without trauma to the children. This program will partner with local law enforcement so that the visitation exchanges can take place at safe exchange sites; the exchanges will take place at either a Division of the Los Angeles Police Department or a Station of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

Services for Recently Emancipated Foster Youth Between the Ages of 18 and 24 who are Pregnant or Have Young Children

In Los Angeles County, there is a critical shortage of housing options for homeless families, especially young parents who are homeless and/or have been recently emancipated from the foster care system. This population faces even greater challenges in obtaining safe, affordable housing and supportive services such as childcare and employment assistance. Through the proposed program, **Gramercy Housing Group (GHG)**'s goal is to provide services to recently emancipated foster youth between the ages of 18 and 24 who are pregnant or have young children. All of the families are female-headed, and have an income at or



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below the Federal Poverty Level at the time of entering the program. GHG's intentions are to break the cycle of abuse and neglect by stabilizing the family housing, providing intense case management and engulfing the family with relative support services. These services would be provided in Supervisorial District II.

Child Abuse Prevention and Early Intervention Project for Developmentally Disabled Children

National research shows that children and adolescents with developmental disabilities are vulnerable to abuse and neglect and are likely to be victimized at a much higher rate than other children (4 to 10 times more often). In addition, this group of children are inadequately educated and supported to seek alternatives to abusive situations. It is also known that there is often an underreporting of abuse, neglect and victimization for children and adolescents with developmental disabilities. Through this funding request, **Alma Family Services** proposes to implement a two-year child abuse and neglect prevention/early intervention project that will serve developmentally disabled children. The overall project goal is to provide child abuse prevention/early intervention, specialized case management services for developmentally disabled children who have been abused or neglected to prevent re-victimization of these children. Alma intends to build and strengthen the bridge between DCFS staff, Regional Center staff and other community service providers while providing appropriate specialized case management support and services, parent training and support groups, and education for these families on child abuse and how to prevent future abuse and neglect. Alma will also work with Regional Centers and other community providers to educate them on the importance of reporting child abuse and neglect and will collect data on the major activities of this project. These services would be provided in Supervisorial District I.

More in-depth information regarding all of these programs is attached to this letter.



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FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact on the County. AB 2994 funds are birth certificate surcharge funds deposited into the County's Children's Trust Fund. The attached chart from DCFS Finance indicates the funding status of AB 2994 surplus funds.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

DCFS has responsibility for administering contracts between the County and private, non-profit community based agencies that receive funding through AB 2994. The overall goal of this funding is to support child abuse prevention, intervention and treatment efforts and activities to help protect the families and children of Los Angeles County. Each of the programs were recommended by Board Offices in Districts I, II, III and V based upon past histories of successfully providing these services. The recommended programs were then vetted and approved through ICAN's multi-disciplinary selection process as described above.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Deanne Tilton".

Deanne Tilton

Executive Director

Inter-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN)

DT:es

Attachments

- c: Sheriff Leroy Baca, ICAN Chairperson
- William Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- Patricia Ploehn, Director, DCFS
- ICAN Policy Committee
- ICAN Operations Committee
- Children's Board Deputies



SPECIAL FUNDS
CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT PREVENT PROGRAM FUND

| CLASSIFICATION | FY 2004/05 ACTUAL | FY 2005/06 ACTUAL | FY 2006/07 ACTUAL | FY 2007/08 ACTUAL | FY 2008/09 Estimated ACTUAL | FY 2009/10 Estimated BUDGET | FY 2010/11 Estimated BUDGET |
|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ALLOCATION | \$3,322,778 | \$3,435,855 | \$4,409,183 | ⁽¹⁾ \$2,103,202 | ⁽¹⁾ \$4,820,893 | ⁽¹⁾ \$3,270,000 | 3,270,000 |
| LEFT OVER FROM PRIOR YEAR | 2,234,000 | 2,235,000 | 3,200,000 | 4,653,000 | 3,812,000 | 5,842,000 | 3,248,000 |
| AVAILABLE FUNDS | <u>\$5,556,778</u> | <u>\$5,670,855</u> | <u>\$7,609,183</u> | <u>\$6,756,202</u> | <u>\$8,632,893</u> | <u>\$9,112,000</u> | <u>\$6,518,000</u> |
| AMOUNT SPENT | <u>\$3,321,716</u> | <u>\$2,471,261</u> | <u>\$2,955,958</u> | <u>\$2,943,879</u> | <u>\$2,790,513</u> ⁽²⁾ | <u>5,863,760</u> ⁽³⁾ | <u>5,863,760</u> ⁽⁴⁾ |
| UNUSED FUNDS | <u>\$2,235,000</u> | <u>\$3,200,000</u> | <u>\$4,653,000</u> | <u>\$3,812,000</u> | <u>\$5,842,000</u> | <u>\$3,248,000</u> | <u>\$654,000</u> |

AB 2994 FUND DESCRIPTION:

The Child Abuse/Neglect Prevention Program Fund was established by Assembly Bill 2994 (Chapter 1399 of 1982) to provide child abuse and neglect prevention services to individuals and families through contracts with private agencies. The Program is financed through special fees collected for birth certificates.

- (1) The allocation includes the cancel reserve designation and appropriation for contingency
- (2) The projected expenditure amounts for FY 2008/09 reflects \$1.6 million for AB 2994 Child Abuse Prevention contracts, \$1.2 million for DMH's DSO. There are no expenditures for Upfront Assessment, Mentoring Services and Incarcerated Parents Program.
- (3) The projected expenditure amounts for FY 2009/10 reflects \$1.5 million for Upfront Assessments, \$1.0 million for Mentoring Services, and \$0.07 million for Incarcerated Parents Program. The ongoing AB 2994 contract amount is \$2.1 million and \$1.2 million for DMH's DSO.
- (4) The projected expenditure amounts for FY 2010/11 reflects \$1.5 million for Upfront Assessments, \$1.0 million for Mentoring Services, and \$0.07 million for Incarcerated Parents Program. The ongoing AB 2994 contract amount is \$2.1 million and \$1.2 million for DMH's DSO.

ACTION ITEMS

April 30, 2009

AB 2994 PREVENTION ALLOCATION

AB 2994 is legislation that was passed in 1982 that imposes an additional \$4.00 fee on birth certificates and requires that these funds be given to community based organizations and be spent on child abuse and neglect activities. As the designated agency in Los Angeles County that is responsible for determining funding guidelines and making funding recommendations, ICAN has presented three prior proposals for funding through these surplus funds: Up-Front Assessments; a Visitation Program for Incarcerated Parents, and Mentoring.

As the last two proposals that were considered by this committee were related to projects that were strongly supported by Supervisor Knabe, the other Board offices have now been given the opportunity to apply for funding for programs they strongly support. We, therefore, have 3 proposals, representing 4 Supervisorial Districts before the Policy Committee for the consideration of funding through AB 2994.

It is recommended that the ICAN Policy Committee support allocation of surplus AB 2994 funds for the following programs:

**1) Family Visitation Center and Safe Child Custody Exchange Programs
Funds to go to Friends of the Family in Supervisorial District 3 and
Grace Resource Center in Supervisorial District 5**

Amount Requested:

Friends of the Family Year 1: **\$115,800**

Friends of the Family Year 2: **\$115,800**

Grace Resource Center Year 1: **\$103,000**

Grace Resource Center Year 2: **\$109,000**

Reason for Funding: Friends of the Family and Grace Resource Center, two non-profit community-based agencies who work in partnership with one another on several different projects, are requesting funding to support the implementation of two related programs that would keep children safe while facilitating connections to their parents from whom they are separated either because they are in out-of-home care or their parents are separated with custody

exchanges necessary in order for these children to be able to spend time in the care of both of their parents.

The first program is for Family Visitation Centers to be located at local churches where meaningful visits can take place between children in out-of-home care and their birth parents in a safe, child and family friendly environment. The centers will be a place where the birth parents can have monitored, supervised, therapeutic and/or neutral visitation with their children in a setting that is conducive to parent/child interaction and in which they can replicate "normal" family interactions.

The second program is a Safe Child Custody Exchange Program designed to assist parents in the transfer of their children from one to the other for visitation and/or custody. The program provides conflicted parents with a safe environment within which custody exchanges can be done peacefully and without trauma to the children. This program will partner with local law enforcement so that the visitation exchanges can take place at safe exchange sites; the exchanges will take place at either a Division of the Los Angeles Police Department or a Station of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

2) Services for Recently Emancipated Foster Youth Between the Ages of 18 and 24 who are Pregnant or Have Young Children;

Supervisory District 2

Funds to go to Gramercy Housing Group (GHG)

Amount Requested:

Year 1: **\$100,000**

Year 2: **\$100,000**

Reason for Funding: In Los Angeles County, there is a drastic shortage of housing options for homeless families, especially young parents who are homeless and/or have been recently emancipated from the foster care system. This population faces even greater challenges in obtaining safe, affordable housing and supportive services such as childcare and employment assistance. Through the proposed program, GHG's goal is to provide services to recently emancipated foster youth between the ages of 18 and 24 who are pregnant or have young children. All of the families are female-headed, and have an income at or below the Federal Poverty Level at the time of entering the program. In response to the urgent need for affordable housing and childcare

services for these young families, GHG currently operates the Gramercy Court and Gramercy Family Center. GHG is requesting funding to provide qualifying young homeless families with necessary services in an atmosphere that fosters personal growth, improved parenting skills, basic education skills, job training, and positive alternatives to discipline. GHG's intentions are to break the cycle of abuse and neglect by stabilizing the family in housing, providing intense case management and engulfing the family with relative support services.

**3) Child Abuse Prevention and Early Intervention Project for
Developmentally Disabled Children; Supervisor District 1
Funds to go to Alma Family Services**

Amount Requested:

Year 1: **\$100,000**

Year 2: **\$100,000**

Reason for Funding: National research shows that children and adolescents with developmental disabilities are known to be vulnerable to abuse and neglect and are likely to be victimized at a much higher rate than other children (4 to 10 times more often). In addition, this group of children are inadequately educated and supported to seek alternatives to abusive situations. It is also known that there is often an underreporting of abuse, neglect and victimization for children and adolescents with developmental disabilities. Through this funding request, Alma Family Services proposes to implement a two-year child abuse and neglect prevention/early intervention project that will serve developmentally disabled children. The overall project goal is to provide child abuse prevention/early intervention, specialized case management services for developmentally disabled children who have been abused or neglected in order to prevent re-victimization of these children. Alma intends to build and strengthen the bridge between DCFS staff, Regional Center staff and other community service providers, provide appropriate specialized case management support and services, provide parent training and support groups for caregivers of these children, and educate the child and parents on child abuse and what to do to prevent future abuse and neglect. Alma will also work with Regional Centers and other community providers to educate them on the importance of reporting child abuse and neglect and will collect data on the major activities of this project.

Friends of the Family
15350 Sherman Way, #140
Van Nuys, CA 91406
Susan Kaplan – Executive Director – susan@fofca.org
Deborah Davies – Director of Programs – deborah@fofca.org
(818)-988-4430

**FAMILY VISITATION CENTER & SAFE CHILD CUSTODY EXCHANGE
PROGRAMS – SAN FERNANDO VALLEY—DISTRICT 3**

Summary of Request

Friends of the Family requests support for the implementation of two related programs that keep children safe while facilitating paths for connection to parents from whom they are separated either because they are in out-of-home child welfare placement or their parents are separated with custody exchanges necessary in order for children to have the care of both of their parents.

The Family Visitation Center SFV is an enhanced approach to family visitation, the child welfare activity that is consistently demonstrated as the number one factor in effectively impacting family reunification. Friends of the Family proposes to develop two Family Visitation Centers in District 3, the first to be located at the San Fernando United Methodist Church followed with one at the Sepulveda United Methodist Church. Friends of the Family will work closely with the DCFS SFV, WSVF and SCV Regional Offices and members of the church congregations to develop warm, community supportive sites that will promote meaningful visits between out-placed children and their birth parents in a safe, child and family friendly environment. The centers will be a place where birth parents can have monitored, supervised, therapeutic and/or neutral visitation with their children in a setting that is conducive to parent/child interaction and in which they can replicate “normal” family interactions. Additionally, the community-based faith setting will enhance parents’ connections in the community.

Friends of the Family will coordinate the program, provide case management, provide professional staff to act as monitors and coaches in called-for cases, recruit church congregation members to become volunteer visitation coaches for appropriate cases, and provide training, supervision, support and oversight for professional and volunteer staff. The agency will interface with the coaches, DCFS offices and families to schedule visits oversee reporting, provide resource linkage, and problem resolution. During the initial year, 60 to 80 families will participate in 700 to 900 visits over the course of the year and in the second year 80 to 100 families will participate in 1000 to 1200 visits over the course of the year .

The Safe Child Custody Exchange Program SFV is designed to assist parents in the transfer of their children from one to the other for visitation and/or custody. The program provides conflicted parents with a safe

environment within which custody exchanges can be done peacefully and without trauma to their children. The Safe Child Custody Exchange Program SFV will partner with the Los Angeles Police Department Van Nuys and Foothill divisions who will provide exchange sites. The program utilizes a well trained team of volunteers as site monitors supervised by an FOF staff member in the position of Program Coordinator. During the initial year, 35 to 60 families per month will participate in 600 to 960 exchanges over the course of the year and in the second year 50 to 100 families per month will participate in 960 to 1200 exchanges over the course of the year.

For the implementation of these two related projects, this proposal requests funding for two years, annually in the amount of \$115,800. The total two year request is \$231,600. Funding will be used for staffing, program administration and coordination, equipping the spaces, training and supervision and materials and supplies (please see detailed budget attached). Economies of scale will be achieved as both components of the program will be overseen by the same Project Director and Project Coordinator and paid and volunteer staff will receive training that will enable them to work in both components.

Agency History

Friends of the Family (FOF), founded in 1972, is one of Southern California's premier community based mental health and family support centers. FOF provides integrated, flexible services and activities that meet the needs of families over time and at critical transitions in their lives so that their social, economic, emotional and physical vitality can be enhanced. With a current annual budget of \$2,000,000, almost 5,000 children and adults participate annually in creative, responsive programs, services and activities provided by Friends of the Family and agency partners. These services and activities provide a safety net of support resulting in improved family and community health, educational readiness and achievement, economic self-sufficiency and community unity. Programs address problems of child abuse and neglect, family and community violence, insufficient income, family instability, school failure and family isolation. The organization mission is to foster strong families, resilient and joyful children, and vibrant communities by providing respectful, responsive family support programs in the greater Los Angeles area.

Since 1972, Friends of the Family (FOF) has built a rich history of leadership in the field of family-centered, strength based programming. The organization is driven by its vision of vibrant communities where children and families thrive and succeed where parents are equipped to be advocates, mentors, champions and cheerleaders for their children, and where each child realizes his or her unique potential of mind, body and spirit. Partnerships include more than two dozen public and private organizations and strong collaborative relationships with 50 public schools. FOF has been the longest-term lead agency in SPA 2 for the DCFS funded family support program since 1997. The organization is the convener of the SPA 2 Council, charged with organizing resident engagement in public issues. The agency is a leader in the development of an array of county-wide initiatives, including the Juvenile Justice Task Force. And, the agency is the SPA 2 lead for the current DCFS funded Prevention Initiative Demonstration

Project implementing services and activities that lead to safe and stable families, emotionally and socially competent children and adults, enhanced resilience and family economic success. **FOF is particularly qualified to implement the Visitation Project based on its mission, history, services, experience, and community reputation, as follows:**

- FOF has demonstrated exemplary leadership as the lead agency in SPA 2 for the DCFS funded Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (since 2008) and Family Support Program (since 1997). Throughout the duration of these long-term contracts, FOF has successfully managed the projects' annual budgets and multiple subcontractors and has maintained a productive relationship with the funder. FOF has demonstrated its **commitment to collaboration**, creating **sustainable networks of community based providers**, which include but are not limited to organizations that provide direct services. Associations, civic, business and faith-based groups are critical members of the FOF led network, characterized by its capacity for sharing power, funding and decision making. The projects utilize the strategies of increasing access to and utilization of beneficial services, activities, resources and supports, intensive case management, increasing economic opportunity and building mutual aid social networks in order to address the challenges and meet the needs of fragile families outside the DCFS system (primary prevention), DCFS evaluated out families (secondary prevention), and families with open DCFS cases (tertiary prevention).
- Nestled within the agency array of supportive services and activities, for more than three decades, Friends of the Family has provided **high quality clinical mental health and case management services**, currently providing these services to more than 1,500 individuals and families annually. The **agency works closely with the DCFS SFV, WSFV and SCV Regional offices**, receiving 30 to 50 referrals monthly for case management, counseling, parenting and family violence intervention services. Designated FOF staff sit on the SFV Office Advisory Council and FOF is a **TDM on-call partner**. Additionally, the agency is the mental health contractor for District 3's Head Start Programs, providing classroom observation, case management, and mental health services.
- Friends of the Family's service philosophy is to support a service model that makes it feasible for staff to develop close relationships with families. Toward that end, they have manageable caseloads, adequate training and supervision, and sufficient time to focus on the families they are trying to help. Overall, a commitment to the philosophy of family-centered services plays a key role in fostering the formation of such relationships. Secondly, Friends of the Family designs its programs targeting at-risk and fragile families based on both crisis intervention and social learning theory. Crisis intervention theory holds that families experiencing a crisis – e.g. about to have a child placed in foster care – are more amenable to receiving services and learning new behaviors. Social learning theory asserts that behavior, beliefs, and expectations influence each other in a reciprocal manner, rather than the belief that changes in thinking and feeling must precede changes in behavior.
- In addition to LAC DCFS, Friends of the Family has **successfully executed contracts** with the LAC Department of Community and Senior Services, LAC

Department of Mental Health, the City of Los Angeles, LAUSD and myriad private foundations.

- From 2002 to 2005, Friends of the Family successfully implemented Project GoodStart, a First 5 funded parent education and family literacy program that provided SPA 2 parents with the training and support they need to give their young children the best possible start in life and to optimize their school readiness. For the three years of the project, Friends of the Family successfully managed Project GoodStart's \$400,000 annual budget, implemented a comprehensive program evaluation, managed two dozen community partners, and developed and implemented an annual community-wide family literacy fair, with attendance of almost 1,000 people, an annual event which has continued since its inauguration. Friends of the Family's successful implementation of Project GoodStart has been attributed by First 5's evaluator, Semics, to "not only the attention FOF's leaders give to **building community partnerships**, but also on the careful attunement to staff's needs for support and training."
- Friends of the Family is consistently **sought out as a collaborative partner** for a range of projects. The organization is currently a funded partner for the state funded Community Challenge Grant (lead is Valley Community Clinic), city funded Family Development Network (lead is Youth Speak Collective), Head Start (leads are Child Care Resource Center, Volunteers of America Los Angeles, & UCLA Early Head Start), First 5 funded SFV Best Babies Collaborative (lead is Northeast Valley Health Corp) and First 5 funded school readiness (leads are Urban Education Partnership, Village Ready for School & Broadous Elementary School).
- Since 1989, Friends of the Family has provided programming for pregnant and parenting adolescents: Young Moms targeting pregnant and parenting teens ages 12 to 22 and Young Dads targeting young fathers ages 15 to 25. The Young Moms Program annually serves 40 pregnant and parenting teen mothers achieving notable success for its objectives of reducing the rate of follow on pregnancy, increasing the rate of high school completion and matriculation to post-secondary education, and **eliminating the need for involvement with DCFS**, compared to the non-served population. The Young Dads program serves 30 young fathers each year, including past cohorts at Juvenile Hall and Phoenix House, also achieving commendable success for its objectives of decreasing involvement in further unplanned pregnancies, increasing nurturing involvement with their children, increasing involvement with secondary and post-secondary education, and increasing the rate of gainful employment.
- Funded by the Stuart Foundations, from 1989 through 1996, in partnership with DCFS, Friends of the Family implemented the agency designed, lauded Family to Family Program. The FTF Program focused entirely on DCFS referred families across the full range of service continuum from VFM to court mandated. The program utilized the intervention modality of Multiple Family Group Therapy (MFGT) and case management to achieve success on 8 measurable program objectives identified as having strong relationship to the two program goals of **1) reduction of abusive and neglectful behaviors on the part of adult program participants and 2) diminishing the effects of child abuse and neglect in the program's child participants.**

Friends of the Family's three dozen varied and creative family strengthening programs serve fragile families who are struggling to provide care and support for their children but are often challenged by poverty and low income, lack of education and employment, shifts in family structure, family or community violence, and holes in the social safety net. Although each of Friends of the Family's individual programs has merit, it is the synergy of the entire network of integrated services that best delivers comprehensive family support.

The Friends of the Family management approach and structure are designed to foster accountability, flexibility, and responsiveness. A volunteer, community-based Board of Directors is elected annually and meets quarterly. The Executive Director of Friends of the Family reports to the Board of Directors and oversees the two million dollar budget and staff of more than 50 professionals, paraprofessionals, and administrative personnel.

Of the more than 5,000 community members Friends of the Family serves annually approximately 22% are children under 12 and 16% are adolescents. Approximately 51% of the center's program participants are Latino, 32% are Caucasian, 11% are African-American, 1% are Asian-Pacific Islander, and 5% are Multi-Ethnic. Friends of the Family provides culturally competent services in a manner respectful of the diverse community's cultures, languages and protocols. Services are provided by a multi-ethnic, culturally diverse, multi-lingual staff and volunteer team.

The Family Visitation Center Program Description, Components and Benefits

Planned and purposeful visitation between parents whose children have been removed from their care by DCFS is a service closely linked to positive outcomes. In fact, as part of DCFS' comprehensive visitation program, a visitation plan is developed for each child placed in protective custody. Plans are developed following guidelines developed by the Los Angeles County Juvenile Dependency Court Visitation Committee (2005). Notwithstanding that children in out-of-home care are usually accorded a schedule of visits with their parents, typically the visits are brief encounters which must fit within a child social worker's demanding schedule and which take place in family un-friendly environments such as offices or restaurants. According to Pat Hess' research, this type of visit is not conducive to optimal parent-child interaction. Enhancing family visitation has been an objective of DCFS and the dependency courts for some time and is specifically cited as a strategy for achieving IV-E Waiver goals of permanency and reduced reliance on out-of-home care.

As an enhanced approach to family visitation, Friends of the Family proposes to develop two Family Visitation Centers (FVC) in District 3, the first to be located at the San Fernando United Methodist Church followed with one at the Sepulveda United Methodist Church. The churches will designate space or structure that can be committed for use for the FVC. Friends of the Family will work closely with the DCFS SFV, WSVF and SCV Regional Offices and members of the church congregations to develop warm, community supportive sites that will promote meaningful visits between out-placed children and their birth parents in a safe, child and family friendly environment. The centers will be a place where birth

parents can have monitored, supervised, therapeutic and/or neutral visitation with their children in a setting that is conducive to parent/child interaction. Additionally, the community-based faith setting will enhance parents' connections in the community.

Friends of the Family will coordinate the program, provide case management, provide professional staff to act as monitors and coaches in called-for cases, recruit church congregation members to become volunteer visitation coaches for appropriate cases, and provide training, supervision, support and oversight for professional and volunteer staff. The agency will interface with the coaches, DCFS offices and families to schedule visits, oversee reporting, provide resource linkage, and problem resolution.

The Centers will be open approximately 20 hours/week in an effort to provide flexibility and support to parents and their children during visitation activities. They will provide a home-like and calming environment so that parents can visit with their children in privacy and dignity and access services and supports to further assist their preparation for the successful and safe return of their children when possible. The church host is a natural fit for Family Visitation Centers because of their already established presence in the community as a positive and non-threatening entity. In addition, the church community has great value in helping the family develop an ongoing support system throughout the process of and subsequent to reunification. The Centers will be designed to:

- Promote meaningful visitation between children and their parents in a safe, child and family friendly setting that is conducive to supporting parent-child interaction
- Offer developmentally appropriate visitation activities
- Facilitate attachment and bonding
- Maintain the parent-child relationship

At the Centers, Friends of the Family will provide:

- A home-like setting where children and families will feel comfortable visiting with one another, a critical factor for successful and expeditious reunification;
- Hours that will accommodate the schedules of parents, children and caregivers; i.e. open in the evenings and on weekends;
- Procedures and activities that regard the safety and security of children as paramount;
- Visitation services including professional and para-professional monitors/coaches who will serve as observers and provide role modeling and education to parents, will affirm the child's membership in the family and will facilitate visits between siblings and children with their relatives;
- Multi-designed levels of intensity of visitation specialist involvement designed to match the assessment of the family's well- or ill-functioning;
- Assessment of functioning and interactions will be conducted in order to promote change as well as document status

According to the Child Welfare Information Gateway report on reunification, parental visitation statistically increases the chances of families being reunited. Regular visitation also reassures the child. Additionally, visitation is a time for family support workers such as visitation coaches to see parents in action and assess what kinds of resources parents need. Research also shows that children in care who are visited frequently by their parents are more likely to have high well-being ratings and to adjust to placement than are children less frequently or never visited.

Staffing & Qualifications

The Family Visitation Centers staffing plan has been developed to assure high quality, competent service implementation while also maximizing flexibility and the engagement of community members in support of the visitation process. Staff credentials and expertise span a spectrum that will enable the provision of varied levels of visitation monitoring associated with the specific challenges faced by participating families.

The staffing pattern is planned such that the duties described below will be executed by each described staff member for both the Family Visitation Center and the Safe Child Custody Exchange components of the project. Staff includes:

Project Director/Supervisor (.010 FTE) – Project oversight will be provided by Friends of the Family's Program Manager, Family Development Programs. This staff member currently directs the agency's implementation of the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project and has expertise in child abuse prevention and intervention, child and youth development and program management. This staff member reports to the agency's Director of Programs.

Project Coordinator (1.00 FTE) – Duties and responsibilities include direct interface with DCFS and referred families to participate in assessment and design of optimum visitation plan for each family, scheduling visits, supervision and support of professional case manager and para-professional visitation volunteers, interface with visitation site personnel to maintain quality of sites, developing and scheduling on-going trainings, and acquisition and provision of resource information, completing reports and maintaining records. The Project Coordinator reports to the Project Director.

Case Manager (0.50 FTE) – Duties and responsibilities include acting as the Visitation Coach/Specialist in cases demanding higher touch intervention and/or where safety concerns are at a higher level, assisting with support and coaching of para-professional volunteer Visitation Specialists, and increasing access to and utilization of beneficial services, activities, resources and supports by families, completing reports and maintaining records. The Case Manager reports to the Project Coordinator.

Para-professional Visitation Specialists/Coaches (10 to 20 Volunteers @ 4 to 6 hours per week) – Duties and responsibilities include monitoring visitations, intervening if safety is compromised, providing parent support and parenting skills coaching, helping parents structure positive time with their children, facilitating purposeful, positive visits between children and their parents, planning

family visitation activities, completing reports and maintaining records. The Visitation Specialist/Coach reports to the Project Coordinator.

All project staff will annually complete a 24-hour Professional Child Visitation Monitor training, currently provided by Georgia Thompson & Associates. This initial training curriculum, based on the California and SVN Supervised Visitation Standards includes: orientation to California uniform standards and guidelines for monitors; do's and don'ts; child abuse, domestic violence, high conflict cases, substance abuse and child development; understanding court orders; and, confidentiality and its limits. Additionally, Visitation Coaches will be provided with training about visitation through a curriculum developed by the South Bay Center for Counseling, which focuses on clinical aspects of visitation, how to monitor visitation, mandated reporting and how to handle emergencies.

All project staff, including volunteer coaches, will be cleared through the Live Scan (criminal and child welfare background checks) process.

All staff will be trained in the use of the adapted Family Visiting Progress Notes form developed by Jorge Colapinto for the Administration for Children's Services, NYC. The Progress Notes form will be completed after each visit, reviewed by the Project Coordinator, and made a part of the family file. All notes are available to the family's DCFS worker.

All staff, paid and volunteer, will participate in on-going case conference and group supervisions provided by the Project Coordinator as well as provided with opportunity for one-on-one coaching and supervision. The Project Coordinator will conduct team building activities, as well, quarterly bringing together the entire staff team for reflection, restoration and recreation.

Target Population, Intake & Assessment

Families will be referred to the Family Visitation Program by the staff from the San Fernando Valley, West San Fernando Valley and Santa Clarita Valley Regional DCFS offices. The referral process will be modeled on the successful referral system the offices and Friends of the Family developed for use in the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project.

The process starts with a referral made by a DCFS worker, on behalf of their family. The referral is given to designated DCFS staff who are responsible for screening the referral for appropriateness and to check for any safeguards or child-detrimental considerations that may need to be in place (Family Visiting Plans must be consistent with dependency and any criminal court orders; per the LA County Juvenile Court Visitation guidelines, family visitation should be disallowed only in rare situations). Referred families will have children in out-of-home placement and may be on a family reunification track or under concurrent planning. Upon assessment of appropriateness for Family Visitation Center participation, the DCFS screener will make the referral to the FOF Project Coordinator. Once referred, the Project Coordinator will meet with the parents to discuss the Visitation Program and make an assessment of their needs, hopes, plans, and scheduling availability. Families are asked to sign two forms, one that delineates the visitation program parameters and an authorization to exchange

information with DCFS. Based on the assessment, the Project Coordinator will match the family with a Visitation Coach. Where appropriate, for the first scheduled visit, the DCFS worker, the family and the Visitation Coach will sit together to discuss the parameters and goals of the visitation process.

Need for Program

Visitation between parents and their children who are in out-of-home care is important for maintaining family relationships and supporting goals for reunification or other permanency arrangements (Wright, L.; 2001). It can alleviate some of the problems experienced by children when they are separated from their families, such as attachment disorders and fear of abandonment, and provide an opportunity to assess the impact of interventions designed to improve parenting skills and parent-child interactions. Visitation is endorsed by the Adoption and Safe Families Act, the Child Welfare League of America, state statutory and case law, and US Children's Bureau policy.

Heretofore, Supervisorial District 3 has not had the opportunity to implement Family Visitation Center sites designed to optimally enhance the ability of out-placed children to interact with their parents and to support the parents in improving their parenting abilities in order to maximize the opportunity for reunification. The average combined caseload of the three DCFS Regional offices that serve District 3 is about 4,000 families. Children in out-of-home placement considered family reunification cases comprise 30 to 35% of that total caseload.

The value of visiting has been amply supported by research which has confirmed a direct correlation between frequency of visits of a parent with his/her children and timely reunification. Research has also shown that frequency of visits is facilitated when neutral individuals monitor the visitation rather than the primary caseworker: "Families who are referred to a supervised visitation center when abused or neglected children are removed from the home have their court cases resolved sooner than if a caseworker supervises family visits. The centers also result in more frequent visits between parents and children, which helps to maintain family ties." (Perkins, D.; 1998)

Safe Child Custody Exchange Program Description

Safe Exchange Programs assist parents in the transfer of their children from one to the other for visitation and/or custody. They are typically designed for parents who are in conflict with one another or who have a history of domestic violence. The children of the families targeted for the Safe Child Custody Exchange Program are not under DCFS jurisdiction although the conflicted relationship of their parents can be quite traumatic for them. Thus, SCCE Programs are a recognized child abuse prevention approach. The Safe Child Custody Exchange Program provides conflicted parents and their children (very often families are under the jurisdiction of the domestic court) a safe environment within which custody exchanges can be done safely and peacefully and usually without the parents having to be in each other's presence. Safe Exchange Programs protect children from being exposed to their parents' conflicts. A child can look forward to an exchange without worrying about what is going to happen. The investment in

safe and supportive places for families to meet can begin the process of healing for all family members and assist in preventing intergenerational repeating of cycles of violence.

The SFV SCCE Program is designed to utilize the Van Nuys and Foothill LAPD stations as the exchange sites. Both sites will be designed such that the following criteria for safe exchange will be met:

- Parents do not have to communicate or have contact with the other parent
- Exchanges will be facilitated by a neutral person (FOF professional and volunteer staff) who will document and keep records of the exchange
- Staggered arrival and departure times will be available
- A child friendly environment will be provided
- Security policies and protocols that meet the safety needs of the community and the individuals using the exchange services can be implemented

The monitoring of each exchange visit will be provided by a well-trained group of volunteers, recruited and supervised by Friends of the Family. A small amount of funding will be reserved for hourly stipends for a select number of community "staff" in order to assure program coverage at harder to schedule hours or at oversubscribed times. The Program Coordinator will be an FOF staff person who will oversee the program, schedule families and volunteers for exchange appointments, and interface with the exchange facilities to assure smooth functioning. This same staff person will act as Program Coordinator for both the Family Visitation Program (DFCS families) and the SCCE Program (non-DCFS families) achieving synergy in volunteer coordination, training and resource development.

Staffing

The Safe Child Custody Exchange Program staffing plan has been developed to assure high quality, competent service implementation while also maximizing flexibility and the engagement of community members in support of the visitation process. Staff credentials and expertise span a spectrum that will enable the provision of varied levels of visitation monitoring associated with the specific challenges faced by participating families.

The staffing pattern is planned such that the duties described below will be executed by each described staff member for both the Safe Child Custody Exchange and Family Visitation Center components of the project. Staff includes:

Project Director/Supervisor (.010 FTE) – Project oversight will be provided by Friends of the Family's Program Manager, Family Development Programs. This staff member currently directs the agency's implementation of the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project and has expertise in child abuse prevention and intervention, child and youth development and program management. This staff member reports to the agency's Director of Programs.

Project Coordinator (1.00 FTE) – Duties and responsibilities include direct interface with referred families to participate in assessment and design of optimum visitation plan for each family, scheduling visits, supervision and support of professional case manager and para-professional visitation volunteers, interface with visitation site personnel to maintain quality of sites, developing and scheduling on-going trainings, and acquisition and provision of resource information, completing reports and maintaining records. The Project Coordinator reports to the Project Director.

Case Manager (0.50 FTE) – Duties and responsibilities include acting as the Visitation Coach/Specialist in cases demanding higher touch intervention and/or where safety concerns are at a higher level, assisting with support and coaching of para-professional volunteer Visitation Specialists, and increasing access to and utilization of beneficial services, activities, resources and supports by families, completing reports and maintaining records. The Case Manager reports to the Project Coordinator.

Para-professional Visitation Specialists (10 to 20 Volunteers @ 4 to 6 hours per week) – Duties and responsibilities include monitoring visitations, intervening if safety is compromised, providing parent support and parenting skills coaching, helping parents structure positive time with their children, facilitating purposeful, positive visits between children and their parents, planning family visitation activities, completing reports and maintaining records. The Visitation Specialist/Coach reports to the Project Coordinator.

All project staff will annually complete a 24-hour Professional Child Visitation Monitor training, currently provided by Georgia Thompson & Associates. This initial training curriculum, based on the California and SVN Supervised Visitation Standards includes: orientation to California uniform standards and guidelines for monitors; do's and don'ts; child abuse, domestic violence, high conflict cases, substance abuse and child development; understanding court orders; and, confidentiality and its limits.

All staff will be trained in the use of the adapted Family Visiting Progress Notes form developed by Jorge Colapinto for the Administration for Children's Services, NYC.

All staff, paid and volunteer, will participate in on-going case conference and group supervisions provided by the Project Coordinator as well as provided with opportunity for one-on-one coaching and supervision. The Project Coordinator will conduct team building activities, as well, quarterly bringing together the entire staff team for reflection, restoration and recreation.

Population to Be Served & Intake

Based on the track records of the SCCE Programs implemented during 2008 in Temple City and Carson, we intend to provide 75 to 90 exchanges each month in the first year of the program. Typically, families will be scheduled for 2 to 4 exchanges each month, enabling approximately 25 families to participate monthly. Over the course of the first year implementation, we estimate that 35 to 60 families will participate in the program.

Participating families will be either voluntary or mandatory court referral, self-referred, or referred by a partner agency.

To access the program, the family will contact the Program Coordinator at FOF. The Program Coordinator will meet with each parent, to discuss the exchange program with them. Topics to be covered include:

- Court order regarding visitation
- Terms of the exchange
- Safety procedures
- Documentation of the exchange
- Schedule for exchange appointments
- Special considerations.

Participants will be asked to sign an agreement delineating the terms of the exchange.

Documentation practices will be consistent with that necessary to support the safety of children and adults and capture critical incidents balanced with respect for the dignity and rights of the participants.

Need for Program

No current service of this kind is being provided in the San Fernando Valley.

The northeast and central San Fernando Valley reports among the highest rates of domestic violence incidences compared with other Los Angeles County areas. As a percentage of population, District 3 has specific zip code areas that rank among the highest in LA County in court ordered family mediations, number of child abuse and neglect incidents reported, and in the number of families requesting law enforcement intervention for domestic violence where children are present.

Conclusion

The Family Visitation Center and Safe Child Custody Exchange Program are two related programs that have at their core a focus on keeping children safe while facilitating paths for connection to parents from whom they are separated either because they are in out-of-home child welfare placement or their parents are separated with custody exchanges necessary in order for children to have the care of both of their parents. Visitation activities ensure ongoing connection/relationship/bonding between a child and his/her family. When visitation activities are linked to helping parents build protective capacities and change behaviors or conditions that caused children to be unsafe or at risk of future harm, children's well-being is enhanced. The implementation of these programs in District 3 will further desired outcomes under both the IV-E Waiver plan and the County strategic plan.

Friends of the Family
 Family Visitation Center and Safe Child Custody Exchange Program – San
 Fernando Valley – District 3
 Annual Budget (Request is for two years)

Personnel

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Project Director (.10FTE x \$4680/mo x 12 mos) | \$ 5,616 |
| Program Coordinator (1.0 FTE x \$3000/mo x 12 months) | \$ 36,000 |
| Case Manager (.50 FTE x \$3,727/mo x 12 months) | \$ 22,446 |
| | <hr/> |
| Total Personnel | \$ 64,062 |
| Payroll Tax @ 9.25% | 5,926 |
| SCCE Program Volunteer Stipends (6 hrs/wk x \$15/hr x 48 wks) | 4,320 |
| Space (1.6 FTE x 100 sf x 2.35/sf x 12 mos) | 4,512 |
| Materials & Supplies (\$450/mo x 12 mos) | 5,400 |
| Stipends to Church sites (\$375/mo x 2 x 12 mos) | 9,000 |
| Site Furniture & Equipment | 5,000 |
| General & Admin (Indirect Rate @ 10% x \$115,800) | 11,580 |
| Training (15 ppl X \$400 pp) | 6,000 |
| | <hr/> |
| Total Budget & Funding Request for Year 1 | \$115,800 |
| Funding Request for Year 2 | \$115,800 |
| Total Two Year Request | <hr/> \$231,600 |



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FAMILY VISITATION CENTER & SAFE CHILD CUSTODY EXCHANGE PROGRAMS – ANTELOPE VALLEY—DISTRICT 5

Summary of Request

Grace Resource Center requests support for the implementation of two related programs that keep children safe while facilitating paths for connection to parents from whom they are separated either because they are in out-of-home child welfare placement or their parents are separated with custody exchanges necessary in order for children to have the care of both of their parents.

The Family Visitation Center AV is an enhanced approach to family visitation, the child welfare activity that is consistently demonstrated as the number one factor in effectively impacting family reunification. Grace Resource Center proposes to develop two Family Visitation Centers in District 5, the first to be located at the Grace Chapel in Lancaster followed with one at Highlands Community Church in Palmdale. Grace Resource Center will work closely with the DCFS Palmdale and Lancaster Regional Offices and members of the church congregations to develop warm, community supportive sites that will promote meaningful visits between out-placed children and their birth parents in a safe, child and family friendly environment. The centers will be a place where birth parents can have monitored, supervised, therapeutic and/or neutral visitation with their children in a setting that is conducive to parent/child interaction and in which they can replicate “normal” family interactions. Additionally, the community-based faith setting will enhance parents’ connections in the community.

Grace Resource Center will coordinate the program, provide case management, provide professional staff to act as monitors and coaches in called-for cases, recruit church congregation members to become volunteer visitation coaches for appropriate cases, and provide training, supervision, support and oversight for professional and volunteer staff. The agency will interface with the coaches, DCFS offices and families to schedule visits, oversee reporting, provide resource linkage, and problem resolution. During the initial year, 60 to 80 families will participate in 700 to 900 visits over the course of the year and in the second year 80 to 100 families will participate in 1000 to 1200 visits over the course of the year.

The Safe Child Custody Exchange Program AV is designed to assist parents in the transfer of their children from one to the other for visitation and/or custody. The program provides conflicted parents with a safe

environment within which custody exchanges can be done peacefully and without trauma to their children. The Safe Child Custody Exchange Program AV will partner with the Lancaster Sheriff's Station and the Children's Center of Antelope Valley who will provide exchange sites. The program utilizes a well trained team of volunteers as site monitors supervised by a GRC staff member in the position of Program Coordinator. During the initial year, 50 to 100 families per month will participate in 960 to 1200 exchanges over the course of the year.

For the implementation of these two related projects, this proposal requests funding for two years, year one in the amount of \$103,000 and year two in the amount of \$109,000. The total two year request is \$212,000. Funding will be used for staffing, program administration and coordination, equipping the spaces, training and supervision and materials and supplies (please see detailed budget attached). Grace Resource Center will budget \$6,000 of current fiscal year (08-09) PIDP funding for training. Economies of scale will be achieved as both components of the program will be overseen by the same Project Coordinator and paid and volunteer staff will receive training that will enable them to work in both components.

Agency History

GRC has an eighteen year history of serving the Antelope Valley. GRC was commissioned in December of 1990 by the Antelope Valley Ministerial Association to eliminate hunger in the Antelope Valley. Beginning with one paid Executive Director and sixteen volunteers, GRC opened its doors on July 1st of 1991. That first year, emergency groceries were distributed to 1,500 people each month. Support was initially received through eight churches and a few local business donations.

Today, GRC has thirteen paid staff and 400 volunteers, working to help the homeless, near-homeless, and the working poor. GRC assists 8,000 people each month with emergency groceries, hot "Souper" meals, clothing, counseling, mail and phone message service, case management, crises intervention, transportation, limited shelter (vouchers), and a lot of TLC.

Realizing early on that groceries and hot meals are only a temporary fix, GRC has developed opportunities for client families and individuals to receive counseling, case management, training in family and financial literacy and computer training. This is done primarily through ongoing P.O.W.E.R. classes, nine week job prep/welfare to work type classes that teach self-development, personal boundaries, and help participants to have better relationships, life and family skills, and financial literacy to help increase family incomes.

Working with the Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS), GRC works with 36 community based partners to maximize opportunities to reduce child abuse and neglect and the social isolation highly associated with child maltreatment. This expansion of GRC's focus came about as a result of the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Program (PIDP) contract. GRC was chosen by DCFS to be the lead agency for this one year project. Through this experience GRC has been able to provide or work with partners to provide: Parenting

classes, Grandparents as Parents classes, Parent Cafés, Family Fairs, and assistance to families with open cases at DCFS by attending TDM (Team Decision Making) Meetings and creating options for those struggling families to get help. As a result of this experience, GRC has expanded its partnerships and is now more closely involved with the SPA 1 Children's Council, United Way of Antelope Valley, and DCFS.

Due the high number of homeless veterans in the Antelope Valley (29% of homeless men are vets), GRC offers extensive service and assistance to that population. GRC has hosted "Point Man" for the past fifteen years. Meeting at Grace every Tuesday night, Point Man is a support/outreach group helping vets and families of vets with the effects of PTSD. Originally set up for Viet Nam vets, Point Man now also works with Gulf War and Iraq War vets.

GRC also hosts Blue Star Moms, which meets two Tuesday nights each month. Participants are parents of active military personnel. The group supports military families and plans welcome home celebrations when veterans come home, especially the injured and killed in action.

Finally, GRC started the Homeless Veteran's Stand Down Committee, bringing together several groups in the A.V. to put on Quarterly Veteran's Stand Downs to help the homeless veterans in the area. The first took place in October of 2003, and 17 Stand Downs have taken place with the most recent one on Saturday, February 21, 2009. The Stand Downs offer medical, mental, and dental help, VA benefits, housing, eye exams, clothing, food, HIV and Hep C testing, tax and legal help, substance abuse services, and referrals to other services provided by GRC and others.

To increase family self-sufficiency, GRC also offers four nine-week P.O.W.E.R. Classes each year teaching life skills and job preparation. To become certified in computer office skills, GRC clients also have access to ongoing computer training classes.

Motel vouchers are given when funding permits. This week GRC has two families with children in a motel for the week as they are looking for places to rent. Last year, GRC spent \$17,392.75 on emergency services which included: transportation, prescriptions, hotel vouchers, minor car repairs, utility assistance, and other necessities concerning safety, employment, and shelter.

Every year, GRC provides 2,000 Thanksgiving Baskets and a big Thanksgiving Dinner at Grace for 300 plus people. Christmas Baskets and toys for the children are provided for 800 plus families. There is also a Christmas Day Dinner every year with toys, Santa, and special activities to over 300 people.

Based on its experience, services offered, and the history of volunteerism, GRC is well suited to implement the two component visitation program including the Safe Child Custody Exchange Program – Antelope Valley (SCCEP—AV) and the Family Visitation Center AV (FVC-AV). The close relationship with community churches, DCFS, and other community based organizations such as the Children's Center of Antelope Valley is a plus. Additionally, the fact that the GRC Executive Director is a Chaplain for the Lancaster Sheriff Station affords the

leveragable relationships to recruit, train, and maintain the volunteer staff necessary to run these important programs.

Safe Child Custody Exchange Program Description

Safe Exchange Programs assist parents in the transfer of their children from one to the other for visitation and/or custody. They are typically designed for parents who are in conflict with one another or who have a history of domestic violence. The children of the families targeted for the Safe Child Custody Exchange Program are not under DCFS jurisdiction although the conflicted relationship of their parents can be quite traumatic for them. Thus, SCCE programs are a recognized child abuse prevention approach. The Safe Child Custody Exchange Program provides conflicted parents and their children (very often families are under the jurisdiction of the domestic court) a safe environment within which custody exchanges can be done safely and peacefully and usually without the parents having to be in each other's presence. Safe Exchange Programs protect children from being exposed to their parents' conflicts. A child can look forward to an exchange without worrying about what is going to happen. The investment in safe and supportive places for families to meet can begin the process of healing for all family members and assist in preventing intergenerational repeating of cycles of violence.

The AV SCCE Program is designed to utilize the Lancaster Sheriff's station and the Children's Center of Lancaster as the exchange sites. Both sites will be designed such that the following criteria for safe exchange will be met:

- Parents do not have to communicate or have contact with the other parent
- Exchanges will be facilitated by a neutral person (GRC volunteer staff) who will document and keep records of the exchange
- Staggered arrival and departure times will be available
- A child friendly environment will be provided
- Security policies and protocols that meet the safety needs of the community and the individuals using the exchange services can be implemented

The monitoring of each exchange visit will be provided by a well-trained group of volunteers, recruited and supervised by Grace Resource Center. A small amount of funding will be reserved for hourly stipends for a select number of community "staff" in order to assure program coverage at harder to schedule hours or at oversubscribed times. The Program Coordinator will be a GRC staff person who will oversee the program, schedule families and volunteers for exchange appointments, and interface with the exchange facilities to assure smooth functioning. This same staff person will act as Program Coordinator for both the Family Visitation Program (DCFS families) and the SCCE Program (non-DCFS families) achieving synergy in volunteer coordination, training and resource development.

Staffing

Building on the model SCCE Programs implemented in 2008 in Temple City and Carson, the SCCE--AV Program will increase efficiency by utilizing volunteer monitors, who will be closely supervised by the 1.00 FTE Program Coordinator, a new staff position GRC will add to optimize successful implementation of the program. The Program Coordinator will report to the Executive Director. The annual budget also includes funds for 6 hours of paid monitor time each week to ensure the availability of a monitor at times a member of the volunteer team might not be available.

The Safe Child Custody Exchange Program staffing plan has been developed to assure high quality, competent service implementation while also maximizing flexibility and the engagement of community members in support of the visitation process. Staff credentials and expertise span a spectrum that will enable the provision of varied levels of visitation monitoring associated with the specific challenges faced by participating families.

The staffing pattern is planned such that the duties described below will be executed by each described staff member for **both** the Safe Child Custody Exchange and Family Visitation Center components of the project. Staff includes:

Project Coordinator (1.00 FTE) – Duties and responsibilities include direct interface with referred families to participate in assessment and design of optimum visitation plan for each family, scheduling visits, supervision and support of professional case manager and para-professional visitation volunteers, interface with visitation site personnel to maintain quality of sites, developing and scheduling on-going trainings, and acquisition and provision of resource information, completing reports and maintaining records. This staff member will have expertise in child abuse prevention and intervention, child development and program management. The Project Coordinator reports to the Executive Director.

Case Manager (0.50 FTE) – Duties and responsibilities include acting as the Visitation Coach/Specialist in cases demanding higher touch intervention and/or where safety concerns are at a higher level, assisting with support and coaching of para-professional volunteer Visitation Specialists, and increasing access to and utilization of beneficial services, activities, resources and supports by families, completing reports and maintaining records. The Case Manager reports to the Project Coordinator.

Para-professional Visitation Specialists (10 to 20 Volunteers @ 4 to 6 hours per week) – Duties and responsibilities include monitoring visitations, intervening if safety is compromised, providing parent support and parenting skills coaching, helping parents structure positive time with their children, facilitating purposeful, positive visits between children and their parents, planning family visitation activities, completing reports and maintaining records. The Visitation Specialist/Coach reports to the Project Coordinator.

All project staff will annually complete a 24-hour Professional Child Visitation Monitor training, currently provided by Georgia Thompson & Associates. This initial training curriculum, based on the California and SVN Supervised Visitation Standards includes: orientation to California uniform standards and guidelines for monitors; do's and don'ts; child abuse, domestic violence, high conflict cases,

substance abuse and child development; understanding court orders; and, confidentiality and its limits.

All staff will be trained in the use of the adapted Family Visiting Progress Notes form developed by Jorge Colapinto for the Administration for Children's Services, NYC.

All staff, paid and volunteer, will participate in on-going case conference and group supervisions provided by the Project Coordinator as well as provided with opportunity for one-on-one coaching and supervision. The Project Coordinator will conduct team building activities, as well, quarterly bringing together the entire staff team for reflection, restoration and recreation.

For the first year of program implementation, the objective is the recruitment of 10 to 20 volunteers who will provide the monitoring function for the program's 24 hour per week operation. Members of the volunteer team will be sought who are bi-lingual and multi-cultural in order to meet a wide array of family profiles. The volunteers will report to the Program Coordinator who will provide on-going supervision, scheduling, trouble shooting, conflict resolution, and assistance.

It is believed that this staffing model will provide a template for expanding the Safe Child Custody Exchange Program across Los Angeles County in a cost-effective manner.

Population to Be Served & Intake

Based on the track records of the SCCE Programs implemented during 2008 in Temple City and Carson, we intend to provide 80 to 100 exchanges each month. Typically, families will be scheduled for 2 to 4 exchanges each month, enabling approximately 30 families to participate monthly. Over the course of the first year implementation, we estimate that 50 to 100 families will participate in the program.

Participating families will be either voluntary or mandatory court referral, self-referred, or referred by a partner agency.

To access the program, the family will contact the Program Coordinator at GRC. The Program Coordinator will meet with each parent, to discuss the exchange program with them. Topics to be covered include:

- Court order regarding visitation
- Terms of the exchange
- Safety procedures
- Documentation of the exchange
- Schedule for exchange appointments
- Special considerations.

Participants will be asked to sign an agreement delineating the terms of the exchange.

Documentation practices will be consistent with that necessary to support the safety of children and adults and capture critical incidents balanced with respect for the dignity and rights of the participants.

Need for Program

No current service of this kind is being provided in the Antelope Valley.

The Antelope Valley reports the highest rate of domestic violence incidences of all Los Angeles County areas. As a percentage of population, the area also ranks among the highest in LA County in court ordered family mediations, number of child abuse and neglect incidents reported, and in the number of families requesting law enforcement intervention for domestic violence where children are present.

The Family Visitation Center Program Description, Components and Benefits

Planned and purposeful visitation between parents whose children have been removed from their care by DCFS is a service closely linked to positive outcomes. In fact, as part of DCFS' comprehensive visitation program, a visitation plan is developed for each child placed in protective custody. Plans are developed following guidelines developed by the Los Angeles County Juvenile Dependency Court Visitation Committee (2005). Notwithstanding that children in out-of-home care are usually accorded a schedule of visits with their parents, typically the visits are brief encounters which must fit within a child social worker's demanding schedule and which take place in family un-friendly environments such as offices or restaurants. According to Pat Hess' research, this type of visit is not conducive to optimal parent-child interaction. Enhancing family visitation has been an objective of DCFS and the dependency courts for some time and is specifically cited as a strategy for achieving IV-E Waiver goals of permanency and reduced reliance on out-of-home care.

As an enhanced approach to family visitation, Grace Resource Center proposes to develop two Family Visitation Centers (FVC) in District 5, the first to be located at the ... Church followed with one at the ... Church. The churches will designate space or structure that can be committed for use for the FVC. GRC will work closely with the DCFS Lancaster and Palmdale Regional Offices and members of the church congregations to develop warm, community supportive sites that will promote meaningful visits between out-placed children and their birth parents in a safe, child and family friendly environment. The centers will be a place where birth parents can have monitored, supervised, therapeutic and/or neutral visitation with their children in a setting that is conducive to parent/child interaction. Additionally, the community-based faith setting will enhance parents' connections in the community.

Grace Resource Center will coordinate the program, provide case management, provide professional staff to act as monitors and coaches in called-for cases, recruit church congregation members to become volunteer visitation coaches for appropriate cases, and provide training, supervision, support and oversight for professional and volunteer staff. The agency will interface with the coaches,

DCFS offices and families to schedule visits, oversee reporting, provide resource linkage, and problem resolution.

The Centers will be open approximately 20 hours/week in an effort to provide flexibility and support to parents and their children during visitation activities. They will provide a home-like and calming environment so that parents can visit with their children in privacy and dignity and access services and supports to further assist their preparation for the successful and safe return of their children when possible. The church host is a natural fit for Family Visitation Centers because of their already established presence in the community as a positive and non-threatening entity. In addition, the church community has great value in helping the family develop an ongoing support system throughout the process of and subsequent to reunification. The Centers will be designed to:

- Promote meaningful visitation between children and their parents in a safe, child and family friendly setting that is conducive to supporting parent-child interaction
- Offer developmentally appropriate visitation activities
- Facilitate attachment and bonding
- Maintain the parent-child relationship

At the Centers, Grace Resource Center will provide:

- A home-like setting where children and families will feel comfortable visiting with one another, a critical factor for successful and expeditious reunification;
- Hours that will accommodate the schedules of parents, children and caregivers; i.e. open in the evenings and on weekends;
- Procedures and activities that regard the safety and security of children as paramount;
- Visitation services including professional and para-professional monitors/coaches who will serve as observers and provide role modeling and education to parents, will affirm the child's membership in the family and will facilitate visits between siblings and children with their relatives;
- Multi-designed levels of intensity of visitation specialist involvement designed to match the assessment of the family's well- or ill-functioning;
- Assessment of functioning and interactions will be conducted in order to promote change as well as document status

According to the Child Welfare Information Gateway report on reunification, parental visitation statistically increases the chances of families being reunited. Regular visitation also reassures the child. Additionally, visitation is a time for family support workers such as visitation coaches to see parents in action and assess what kinds of resources parents need. Research also shows that children in care who are visited frequently by their parents are more likely to have high well-being ratings and to adjust to placement than are children less frequently or never visited.

Staffing & Qualifications

The Family Visitation Centers staffing plan has been developed to assure high quality, competent service implementation while also maximizing flexibility and the engagement of community members in support of the visitation process. Staff credentials and expertise span a spectrum that will enable the provision of varied levels of visitation monitoring associated with the specific challenges faced by participating families.

The staffing pattern is planned such that the duties described below will be executed by each described staff member for both the Family Visitation Center and the Safe Child Custody Exchange components of the project. Staff includes:

Project Coordinator (1.00 FTE) – Duties and responsibilities include direct interface with DCFS and referred families to participate in assessment and design of optimum visitation plan for each family, scheduling visits, supervision and support of professional case manager and para-professional visitation volunteers, interface with visitation site personnel to maintain quality of sites, developing and scheduling on-going trainings, and acquisition and provision of resource information, completing reports and maintaining records. This staff person will have expertise in child abuse prevention, child development and program management. The Project Coordinator reports to the Executive Director.

Case Manager (0.50 FTE) – Duties and responsibilities include acting as the Visitation Coach/Specialist in cases demanding higher touch intervention and/or where safety concerns are at a higher level, assisting with support and coaching of para-professional volunteer Visitation Specialists, and increasing access to and utilization of beneficial services, activities, resources and supports by families, completing reports and maintaining records. The Case Manager reports to the Project Coordinator.

Para-professional Visitation Specialists/Coaches (10 to 20 Volunteers @ 4 to 6 hours per week) – Duties and responsibilities include monitoring visitations, intervening if safety is compromised, providing parent support and parenting skills coaching, helping parents structure positive time with their children, facilitating purposeful, positive visits between children and their parents, planning family visitation activities, completing reports and maintaining records. The Visitation Specialist/Coach reports to the Project Coordinator.

All project staff will annually complete a 24-hour Professional Child Visitation Monitor training, currently provided by Georgia Thompson & Associates. This initial training curriculum, based on the California and SVN Supervised Visitation Standards includes: orientation to California uniform standards and guidelines for monitors; do's and don'ts; child abuse, domestic violence, high conflict cases, substance abuse and child development; understanding court orders; and, confidentiality and its limits. Additionally, Visitation Coaches will be provided with training about visitation through a curriculum developed by the South Bay Center for Counseling, which focuses on clinical aspects of visitation, how to monitor visitation, mandated reporting and how to handle emergencies.

All project staff, including volunteer coaches, will be cleared through the Live Scan (criminal and child welfare background checks) process.

All staff will be trained in the use of the adapted Family Visiting Progress Notes form developed by Jorge Colapinto for the Administration for Children's Services, NYC. The Progress Notes form will be completed after each visit, reviewed by the Project Coordinator, and made a part of the family file. All notes are available to the family's DCFS worker.

All staff, paid and volunteer, will participate in on-going case conference and group supervisions provided by the Project Coordinator as well as provided with opportunity for one-on-one coaching and supervision. The Project Coordinator will conduct team building activities, as well, quarterly bringing together the entire staff team for reflection, restoration and recreation.

Target Population, Intake & Assessment

Families will be referred to the Family Visitation Program by the staff from the Lancaster and Palmdale Regional DCFS offices.

The process starts with a referral made by a DCFS worker, on behalf of their family. The referral is given to designated DCFS staff who are responsible for screening the referral for appropriateness and to check for any safeguards or child-detrimental considerations that may need to be in place (Family Visiting Plans must be consistent with dependency and any criminal court orders; per the LA County Juvenile Court Visitation guidelines, family visitation should be disallowed only in rare situations). Referred families will have children in out-of-home placement and may be on a family reunification track or under concurrent planning. Upon assessment of appropriateness for Family Visitation Center participation, the DCFS screener will make the referral to the GRC Project Coordinator. Once referred, the Project Coordinator will meet with the parents to discuss the Visitation Program and make an assessment of their needs, hopes, plans, and scheduling availability. Families are asked to sign two forms, one that delineates the visitation program parameters and an authorization to exchange information with DCFS. Based on the assessment, the Project Coordinator will match the family with a Visitation Coach. Where appropriate, for the first scheduled visit, the DCFS worker, the family and the Visitation Coach will sit together to discuss the parameters and goals of the visitation process.

Need for Program

Visitation between parents and their children who are in out-of-home care is important for maintaining family relationships and supporting goals for reunification or other permanency arrangements (Wright, L.; 2001). It can alleviate some of the problems experienced by children when they are separated from their families, such as attachment disorders and fear of abandonment, and provide an opportunity to assess the impact of interventions designed to improve parenting skills and parent-child interactions. The Adoption and Safe Families Act, the Child Welfare League of America, state statutory and case law, and US Children's Bureau policy all endorse visitation.

Heretofore, Supervisorial District 5 has not had the opportunity to implement Family Visitation Center sites designed to optimally enhance the ability of out-placed children to interact with their parents and to support the parents in

improving their parenting abilities in order to maximize the opportunity for reunification, notwithstanding that District 5 typically has more than 1,500 children in out-of-home placement.

The value of visiting has been amply supported by research which has confirmed a direct correlation between frequency of visits of a parent with his/her children and timely reunification. Research has also shown that frequency of visits is facilitated when neutral individuals monitor the visitation rather than the primary caseworker: "Families who are referred to a supervised visitation center when abused or neglected children are removed from the home have their court cases resolved sooner than if a caseworker supervises family visits. The centers also result in more frequent visits between parents and children, which helps to maintain family ties." (Perkins, D.; 1998)

Conclusion

The Family Visitation Center and Safe Child Custody Exchange Program are two related programs that have at their core a focus on keeping children safe while facilitating paths for connection to parents from whom they are separated either because they are in out-of-home child welfare placement or their parents are separated with custody exchanges necessary in order for children to have the care of both of their parents. Visitation activities ensure ongoing connection/relationship/bonding between a child and his/her family. When visitation activities are linked to helping parents build protective capacities and change behaviors or conditions that caused children to be unsafe or at risk of future harm, children's well-being is enhanced. The implementation of these programs in District 5 will further desired outcomes under both the IV-E Waiver plan and the County strategic plan.

Grace Resource Center
 Safe Child Custody Exchange Program and Family Visitation Center – Antelope
 Valley – District 5
 Annual Budget (Request is for two years)

Personnel

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Program Coordinator (1.0 FTE X \$3000/mo X 12 mos) | \$ 36,000 |
|---|-----------|

| | |
|--|--------|
| Case Manager (.50 FTE x \$3,600/m x 12 mos) | 21,600 |
|--|--------|

| | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Total Personnel | \$ 57,600 |
|-----------------|-----------|

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|----------------------|-------|
| Payroll Tax @ 10.94% | 6,300 |
|----------------------|-------|

| | |
|--|-------|
| SCCE Program Volunteer Stipends (6 hrs/wk x \$15/hr x 48 wks) | 4,320 |
|--|-------|

| | |
|---|-------|
| Space (1.5 FTE x 100sf x 2.00/sf x 12 mos) | 3,600 |
|---|-------|

| | |
|--|-------|
| Materials & Supplies (\$350/mo x 12 mos) | 4,200 |
|--|-------|

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Telephone Service (\$130/mo X 12 mos) | 1,560 |
|---------------------------------------|-------|

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Printing (\$43.33/mo X 12 mos) | 520 |
|--------------------------------|-----|

| | |
|--|-------|
| Stipends to Church sites (\$375/mo x 2 x 12 mos) | 9,000 |
|--|-------|

| | |
|----------------------------|-------|
| Site Furniture & Equipment | 5,000 |
|----------------------------|-------|

| | |
|---|--------|
| General & Admin (indirect Rate @ 10% x \$109,000) | 10,900 |
|---|--------|

| | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Training (15 ppl X \$400 pp) | 6,000 |
|------------------------------|-------|

| | |
|--------------|-----------|
| Total Budget | \$109,000 |
|--------------|-----------|

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|
| PIDP Funding Contribution(yr 1 only) | (6,000) |
|--------------------------------------|---------|

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Funding Request for Year 1 | \$103,000 |
|----------------------------|-----------|

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Funding Request for Year 2 | \$109,000 |
|----------------------------|-----------|

| | |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Total Two Year Request | \$212,000 |
|------------------------|-----------|

AGENCY INFORMATION

Summary of agency history, mission, goals, and objectives

Founded in 1992, Gramercy Housing Group (GHG) is a non-profit community organization whose mission is to provide service-enriched affordable housing and assistance to young families as they transition to their own homes. GHG began as a volunteer organization composed of a group of social workers and child advocates who envisioned creating a safe, nurturing environment for young families. Over the years, we have grown into an organization that uniquely brings together the essential services needed by young families, which include access to affordable housing, on-site childcare, education/employment assistance and supportive services. More information about GHG can be found on our website:

www.gramercyhousinggroup.org.

The goals of GHG are threefold:

- To reduce the number of homeless families
- To decrease abuse and neglect of women and children
- To decrease the number of families dependent on public assistance by increasing their economic literacy and savings capacity through sound economic and social development

To achieve our mission, GHG operates Gramercy Court, a 16-unit transitional affordable housing center connected to supportive services, and Gramercy Family Center, a licensed childcare center. Through the program, young parents get connected to the resources they need to increase their self-esteem, gain economic and educational skills, and achieve independence. GHG operates with a staff of 8 full-time employees and 2 part-time employees. Additionally, a committed group of community volunteers lend their time and expertise to support GHG, including an 8-member volunteer Board of Directors.

Statement of need for agency services

In Los Angeles County, there is a drastic shortage of housing options for homeless families; young parents (ages 18-24) who are homeless and/or have been recently emancipated face even greater challenges in obtaining safe, affordable housing and supportive services such as childcare and employment assistance. In the state of California, it is estimated that 65% of the approximately 4,355 emancipated youth each year lack stable housing at the time they leave the foster care system.¹ These families often possess a myriad of other barriers that prevent them from finding stable housing, including issues of physical and sexual abuse, alcohol and drug abuse and lack of educational skills. The children in these families often experience devastating repercussions from being homeless, such as malnutrition, emotional disorders and developmental delays.

Within Service Planning Area (SPA) 4, the region where GHG is located, the need for housing and child care for young families is great. The Children's Planning Council indicates that 25% of the population in SPA 4 lives at or below the poverty level and the 2007 Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority Count identified 20,030 homeless individuals in SPA 4 Metro.² Many of these homeless individuals are young families in need of housing assistance and affordable child care.

Description of current programs, activities, and accomplishments

In response to the urgent need for affordable housing and childcare services for homeless young families, GHG operates the Gramercy Court and Gramercy Family Center.

¹ "Report on the Survey of the Housing Needs of Emancipated Foster/Probation Youth." California Department of Social Services, June 2002.

² "2005 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count." Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, January 12, 2006.

Gramercy Court: A 16-unit (including one manager's unit) transitional affordable housing program for young parents and their children. The program primarily serves recently emancipated foster youth between the ages of 18 and 24 who are pregnant or have a young child. Residents can stay a maximum of two years in apartments that have a kitchen, bathroom, bedroom and living area. In addition to housing, Gramercy Court offers supportive services to families, including on-site childcare, case management, job training and education referrals, parenting education, and other life skills workshops. These resources are invaluable to families as they stabilize and move to self-sufficiency upon the completion of the program.

The goal of Gramercy Court is to support young families and their children in their transition to permanent housing. All families focus on achieving the following goals:

- Utilize Gramercy Family Center, the on-site licensed childcare center
- Participate in regular case management sessions and parenting classes
- Obtain a high school diploma/GED or full time employment
- Secure permanent housing

Gramercy Family Center: The licensed childcare center of Gramercy Housing Group provides full day care and developmentally appropriate curriculum for children ages 0 to 5. The 1,700 square foot center is divided into two separate age-appropriate play rooms (3 months to 2 years and 2 to 5 years) and an outdoor play yard. Four full-time teachers supervise and care for the children. Renovated and re-opened in September 2006, the Gramercy Family Center is now open to both the children at GHG as well as children living in the surrounding neighborhoods and communities.

GHG has been tremendously successful in achieving its goal of supporting young families in their transition to self-sufficiency. Currently, 15 mothers and 15 children receive childcare, parenting, and case management services. Of the families who have stayed more than six months:

- 90% attended school and/or found employment
- 90% relocated to affordable permanent housing
- 100% participated in weekly parenting groups
- 100% participated in our childcare and parenting program
- 100% participated in weekly life skills education
- 100% percent participated in case management

Anecdotal information also offers a view into our accomplishments. GHG alumni remain connected to the agency, and each other, and often call and visit. Our graduates are now employed as bus drivers, vocational nurses, county caseworkers, administrative assistants, and in a variety of other fields. A recent success story is Simona. Simona came to GHG dejected, feeling that she would not be able to obtain her high school diploma and achieve self-sufficiency because she was forced to leave her family home with a two-month old baby girl. However, after working with our case management staff and utilizing supportive services to address her barriers to self-sufficiency, she became hopeful again. Simona graduated from GHG with a GED, a nursing assistant certificate, a medical billing certificate and a medical office assistant certificate. With the skills and confidence she gained from GHG, Simona also secured a full -time job before transitioning to her own apartment. Simona's daughter continues to come to our childcare center in order to maintain the bonds she has created during her 2-year stay at GHG.

FUNDING REQUEST

Project goals and objectives

The goal of Gramercy Housing Group is to provide young homeless families with an atmosphere that fosters personal growth, improved parenting skills, basic education skills, job training, and positive alternatives to discipline. GHG's intentions are to break the cycle of abuse and neglect by stabilizing the family in housing, providing intense case management and engulfing the family with relative support

services. GHG offers prevention and intervention services to enhance the well-being of the family. Parenting groups taught by skilled clinicians and partnerships with the Early Childhood Parenting Center (ECPC) enable GHG to provide guidance through modeling, role playing, and group discussions. In addition, dyadic therapy is offered to families that need more in depth help with positive parenting skills. Another way is through weekly Life Skills groups where families learn about household maintenance and child safety, nutrition, anger management, stress reduction, domestic violence, and healthy parent-child relationships. Various community partners lead these group sessions such as Sojourn for domestic violence education, Planned Parenthood for personal health and safety, and Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services for child abuse and neglect prevention.

GHG will achieve the following objectives over the upcoming year:

- Provide 24 homeless/low-income children with 40 hours/week each of learning-enriched services, as measured by applications and sign-in sheets.
- 75% of parents will gain new parenting skills and knowledge (based on multiple indicators,) as measured post-tests and interviews.
- A minimum of 80% of families will experience an increased mother-child relationship, as measured by group discussions and one-on-one feedback with mothers.

The program will directly benefit homeless emancipated families by providing stable housing and support services to increase family bonding and growth.

Profile of geographical area and population served

GHG services are primarily targeted for recently emancipated foster youth between the ages of 18 and 24 who are pregnant or have young children. All of our families are female-headed, and have an income at or below the Federal Poverty Level at the time of entering our program. Most of our parents are unemployed and have not completed education past the high school level upon entering our program. Our families also possess a wide range of challenges, including substance addictions, lack of life skills and no social support. GHG is located in the historic West Adams area of Los Angeles, although our programs are available to any qualified applicant from Los Angeles County. Most of our families come from low-income areas in South and Central Los Angeles.

Strategies for implementation

GHG will work towards its goals and objectives by implementing a multi-service program that addresses the holistic needs of young families. The following components are provided through GHG:

- **Full-Day Licensed Childcare:** Full-day care and developmentally appropriate curriculum for the children is provided for parents residing at on-site Gramercy Court. Childcare is also available for children living in the surrounding neighborhood. The center promotes a child-centered program that fosters self-esteem, relationship building, self-expression, creativity, diversity, problem solving, and communication in a physically and emotionally safe environment.
- **Early Assessments:** Each child receives an assessment to screen for possible developmental delays, serious health issues and other potential results from high-risk pregnancies. Through this process, we are able to detect issues early, and connect children to necessary supportive services such as occupational therapy, speech therapy and physical therapy.
- **Play Therapy:** Trained professionals from the Early Childhood Parenting Center use play to explore the challenging issues occurring in the children's lives. Children gain the opportunity to experience greater self-awareness and articulate their inner feelings and thoughts, which supports their growth as healthy kids.
- **Parenting Groups:** Weekly, on-going parenting groups are held to provide parents and their children with regular bonding and learning. Since 2002, we have offered a "Mommy and Me"

Two Year Budget

| Personnel | Year 1 | Year 2 |
|------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Executive Director (.05 FTE) | \$ 3,500.00 | \$ 3,500.00 |
| Program Director (.25 FTE) | \$ 12,500.00 | \$ 12,500.00 |
| Operations Manager (.5 FTE) | \$ 21,000.00 | \$ 21,000.00 |
| Case Manager Asst. (.25 FTE) | \$ 5,000.00 | \$ 5,000.00 |
| Sub-total Wages | \$ 42,000.00 | \$ 42,000.00 |
| Benefits | \$ 11,760.00 | \$ 11,760.00 |
| Sub-total Wages | \$ 11,760.00 | \$ 11,760.00 |
| TOTAL PERSONNEL | \$ 53,760.00 | \$ 53,760.00 |
| OPERATING: | | |
| Maintenance/Repair | \$ 10,000.00 | \$ 10,000.00 |
| Utilities | \$ 15,000.00 | \$ 15,000.00 |
| Insurance | \$ 7,000.00 | \$ 7,000.00 |
| Postage | \$ 500.00 | \$ 500.00 |
| Security | \$ 1,200.00 | \$ 1,200.00 |
| Telephone | \$ 2,400.00 | \$ 2,400.00 |
| Supplies | \$ 2,000.00 | \$ 2,000.00 |
| Grounds | \$ 1,500.00 | \$ 1,500.00 |
| Sub-total Wages | \$ 39,600.00 | \$ 39,600.00 |
| Administration | \$ 6,640.00 | \$ 6,640.00 |
| Total Budget | \$ 100,000.00 | \$ 100,000.00 |

Alma Family Services
1055 Corporate Center Drive, St. 430
Monterey Park, CA 91754

**Child Abuse Prevention/Early Intervention Project for
Developmentally Disabled Children**

Background Information

Alma Family Services was established in 1975 in East Los Angeles by parents to provide a comprehensive range of multilingual community based services for those with special needs including emotional, physical and/or developmental delay and their families. Over the years, the agency has grown and expanded services to additional communities. Mental health and child and family development programs include the Centro Estrella Family Resource Center, preschool and after school programs, family and peer support programs, wraparound youth services and a unique aquatics center with programs for children, adolescents, adults and older adults with special needs.

Alma Family Services has a long history of collaborating with partners in our communities. Some of our collaborative partners include Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, local law enforcement agencies, Regional Centers, AltaMed Health Services Corporation, Los Angeles Universal Preschool, Los Angeles Unified School District, Montebello and El Rancho school districts, City of Los Angeles Mayor's office, members of the local service provider network as well as local faith based organizations. With San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Centers and Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, Alma Family Services participated in the development of the Mental Health Provider Program for individuals with developmental disability, which has become a model for mental health service delivery for Regional Centers in Los Angeles County.

Through DCFS, Alma Family Services provides Wraparound services and is a member of the SPA 7 collaborative Child Abuse/Neglect Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project. In addition, Alma Family Services operated a specialized unit at Mac Laren Children's Center working with Charles Sophy, M.D., DCFS Medical Director, to provide follow-up, case management and mental health services for developmentally disabled children who were transitioning from this facility to community placement (beginning in December of 2001). The Mac Laren project was found to be highly successful. The data analysis revealed a 92% community placement retention rate for the first critical 6 months for those children referred to Alma for services.

Through the guidance of Supervisor Gloria Molina's staff, Alma is involved in the planning of future services at Mac Laren Children's Center along the Centro

Estrella Model. At the present time, four (4) cottages have been designated to house programs operated by Alma. Among the services being discussed for inclusion are 1) mental health services for individuals with disabilities and their families, 2) an inclusive preschool program with a mix of children both with and without developmental disabilities, 3) after school program, and 4) Community Integration and Training program (CIT). If funded, one of the cottages will be designated to house this proposed project.

Statement of the Problem

Both from Alma's experience and research nationally, children and adolescents with developmental disabilities are known to be vulnerable to abuse and neglect and are likely to be victimized at a much higher rate than other children (4 – 10 times more frequently). These children are at a higher risk for re-victimization and are often abused for longer periods of time by persons they know and who may be responsible for their care and support. The people responsible for providing care for developmentally disabled children often report experiencing:

- significant demands for care as compared to other children
- chronic stress of being the caregiver
- attachment issues for the parent
- isolation
- lack of support
- unrealistic expectations for the children
- behavioral and aggressive behavior of the child
- substance abuse on the part of the caregiver.

In addition, this group of children are inadequately educated and supported to seek alternatives to abusive situations.

It is also known that there is often an underreporting of abuse, neglect and victimization for children and adolescents with developmental disabilities. Individuals within the response system may lack training and expertise to work with children who have developmental disabilities. A lack of training and knowledge of children with developmental disabilities may impact the amount and quality of data collected related to child abuse and neglect.

The 2000 ICAN (Inter-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect) The State of Child Abuse in Los Angeles County Report included a special report on Child Abuse and Developmental Disabilities. Among the conclusions noted was a call for "improved identification, reporting, intervention and services for these children, since it is recognized that abuse is a significant problem for children with disabilities." In addition, five (5) recommendations made were noted as "carried over from the 1994 Report," suggesting that progress has been slow.

Proposed Project

Alma Family Services proposes to implement a two-year child abuse and neglect prevention/early intervention project that will serve developmentally disabled children who reside in District 1. This project will coordinate with the DCFS District Offices in District 1 to identify children who have experienced child abuse and neglect as well as a developmental disability.

The overall project goal is to provide child abuse prevention/early intervention specialized case management services for developmentally disabled children who have been abused or neglected in order to prevent re-victimization of these children. This goal will be accomplished through the following:

1. Building and strengthening the bridge between DCFS staff, Regional Centers staff, and other community service providers who specialize in providing services for children who have a developmental disability.
2. Providing linguistically and culturally appropriate specialized case management support and services to assist DCFS and Regional Centers service providers who are working with children who have experienced child abuse and have a developmental disability.
3. Provide a parent training and support group for caretakers of children who have experienced abuse and have a developmental disability.
4. Educate the children and parents on child abuse and what to do to prevent future abuse and neglect.

While Alma Family Services operates other programs either through a contract with DCFS or through collaborative ventures, the staff members who are assigned to this program will use their allocated time for this project only. The project, though designed to be community-based, will be housed at the Mac Laren Children's Center.

This project will utilize 1½ full time child abuse specialists (case managers) who will coordinate with DCFS and Regional Centers staff members to identify for children with developmental disabilities and have been abused or neglected. The role of the child abuse specialist will be to facilitate the process of linking children and families to service providers who specialize or are familiar with developmental disabilities, to provide mentoring and training on child abuse and the developmentally disabled, build and strengthen a bridge with service providers in order to decrease the likelihood of re-victimization of the children, provide parent training and support and educate the children on child abuse and neglect and what they can do.

The staff member will also build and/or strengthen a bridge between DCFS, Regional Centers and other specialty service providers who work with children with developmental disabilities. The Alma Family Services staff member will coordinate with significant members of the community provider network and provide training and mentoring regarding mandated reporting to improve the reporting process for child abuse and neglect for this specific population.

The goal is not to replace existing case management services but to augment services with a specialized approach for this population. The Alma staff will serve as child abuse specialist, facilitator, case manager, advocate, consultant and educator. At any given time, each full time staff member will carry an average caseload of approximately 15 children and their families. Over two year period, an estimated number of 150 children will be directly serviced by this project.

Parents/caretakers whose children are part of this program, will be encouraged to become involved in various activities or programs that will bring them together in a positive way with other parents. For example, there are currently efforts to develop a Neighborhood Action Council (NAC) in SPA 3. The goal of the development of this council is to build community support and capacity and decrease the isolation within the community for families who have a child with a developmental disability. The parents/ caretakers would be encouraged to assist with the development of a local council.

The child abuse specialists will provide a weekly parent training and support group in Spanish and English for the parents/caretakers of children identified as part of this project. This class will be tailored to meet the needs of the participants. In this group, the Alma Family Services staff intent to utilize curriculum such as the Triple P - Positive Parenting Program, which has a module specifically designed for the parents of children who have a developmental disability. The Triple P program is also included on the evidence-based program list for Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health and is available in Spanish and English. In addition, several presentations have been developed in-house in Spanish and English for parents who have children with special needs with such topics as IEP (Individualized Education Plan), Behavioral Issues, Puberty and Sexuality, Understanding Autism, etc., which were designed (in Spanish and English) for the parents of children with disabilities. It is estimated that a total of 50 direct service hours for this support groups will be provided for parents each year.

This project will also educate the children identified for this program on child abuse, what it is, and what they can do to prevent future abuse. This will be done on a one to one basis. The training will be individualized and designed to best meet the needs and capabilities of the children. This training is estimated to take place approximately 8 – 9 times each month.

Staffing Patterns

A total of 1.55 FTE positions will be dedicated exclusively to this project. The requested positions are described below:

Project Oversight (0.05 FTE Program Supervisor) – The staff member identified for this role has developed an expertise in child abuse prevention and intervention as well as developmental disabilities. This staff member will also be responsible for determining through a collaborative process the specific data that will be collected for future program planning.

Child Abuse Specialists (1.50 FTE Case Manager) – These bilingual staff members will have an expertise in child abuse and neglect prevention and intervention as well as children with developmental disabilities. Abuse and neglect prevention information pertaining to children who have developmental disabilities will be made available to program staff.

Budget Information

A total of 1.55 FTE positions will be included in this project for an annual budget amount of \$100,000 and a total two-year project budget of \$200,000.

Personnel

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Program Supervisor (0.05 FTE X 12 months) | \$ 3,250 |
| Case Manager (1.50 FTE X 12 months) | <u>\$57,000</u> |
| Total Salaries | \$60,250 |

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Employee Benefits (18.5% which includes FICA, Health and Life Insurance, Retirement, Workers' Compensation, and Misc.) | <u>\$11,146</u> |
| Total Salaries and Benefits | \$71,396 |

Operating Expenses

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Travel & Mileage Reimbursement | \$ 1,800 |
| General Office Supplies | 1,600 |
| Equipment (2-computers and printers) | 1,800 |
| Other (see attached budget for detail) | <u>10,360</u> |
| Total Operating Expenses | \$15,560 |

Total Direct Costs \$ 86,956

Administrative Costs (Indirect Rate 15%)

Total Administrative Costs \$ 13,044

| | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Total Annual budget | \$100,000 |
| Total Two-Year Project | \$200,000 |

Anticipated Outcomes

Alma Family Services will collect data regarding the major activities of this project. Data to be collected will include demographic information on the children and families, and amount and type of service provided. Information pertaining to training on developmental disabilities for individuals who are accepting child abuse reports will be tracked for frequency and content. The children and families will also be asked to provide input related to their experiences and what things would have better helped them.

Data will be reviewed quarterly and an annual review will be written at the end of each program year. It is anticipated that the data collection will not take up a significant amount of time because it will be integrated into the project as part of the routine documentation process.

Alma Family Services has a data management system that is capable of tracking and managing all of the data for this project. Data will be reviewed on a quarterly basis by the supervisor, quality assurance staff, and child abuse specialists. The quality assurance department will assist with the data analysis.

Implementation Plan

Alma Family Services has a long history of successfully implementing and operating high quality programs. The administrative team is familiar with the process of start up and prepared to assist with the implementation of this project. The agency has been successful at quickly staffing new programs with qualified bilingual staff. Often, this is accomplished through internal transfers.

Many steps in the implementation process have been anticipated. The steps identified in the table include activities that are needed from a programmatic perspective (hiring staff, obtaining needed materials, etc.) as well as administrative tasks that need to be completed to support the program (office space set up, data management system configured to track outcome data). We have found the most important aspect of the implementation process is clear communication within the agency and with the local provider network.

| Implementation Plan | |
|---|--------------|
| Activity: for completion: | Timeline |
| 1. Meet with the supervisors and staff at DCFS and Regional Centers to determine procedures for working together and communicating on a regular basis. | 15 days |
| 2. Set up work space at Mac Laren Children's Center (for example: appropriately furnish cottage, stock general office supplies, determine storage of confidential information, set up necessary security procedures, and set in place typical office equipment such as telephones, computers, fax, photocopying). | 15 days |
| 3. Hire or transfer bilingual staff and provide orientation training as needed. | 15 days |
| 4. Supervisor to facilitate weekly program implementation Meetings to evaluate implementation needs and progress. | Ongoing |
| 5. Determine data tracking system (logs, forms, surveys, etc.) and have computer data management system configured to track information for this project. | 15 days |
| 6. Order materials needed for parent training and child education. | 15 days |
| 7. Update website to reflect this new project as well as provide helpful links. | 60 days |
| 8. Contact service providers who specialize in providing services for children who have developmental disabilities, describe project and discuss collaborative work. | 15 – 30 days |

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 9. Begin to provide services. | 30 days |
| 10. Begin to provide education including parent training and support. | 30 – 60 days |

**ALMA FAMILY SERVICES
CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION
12-MONTH BUDGET**

A. Personnel:

| Position | Name | # of FTEs(*) | Annual Salary | % to Program | # of Months | Total Cost |
|--------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| Program Supervisor | To be hired | 0.05 | \$ 65,000 | 5% | 12 | \$ 3,250 |
| Case Manager | To be hired | 1.00 | \$ 38,000 | 100% | 12 | \$ 38,000 |
| Case Manager | To be hired | 0.50 | \$ 38,000 | 50% | 12 | \$ 19,000 |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | TOTAL | 1.55 | | | | \$ 60,250 |

* Full time equivalent = 37.50 hours per week

Total Personnel: \$ 60,250

B. Fringe Benefits:

| Component | Wage | Rate | Cost |
|-------------------------|-----------|--------|-----------|
| FICA | \$ 60,250 | 7.65% | \$ 4,609 |
| Health & Life Insurance | \$ 60,250 | 6.00% | \$ 3,615 |
| Retirement | \$ 60,250 | 3.00% | \$ 1,808 |
| Workers' Compensation | \$ 60,250 | 1.50% | \$ 904 |
| Misc: LTD, SUI, & etc. | \$ 60,250 | 0.35% | \$ 210 |
| | | | |
| | TOTAL | 18.50% | \$ 11,146 |

Total Fringe Benefits: \$ 11,146

C. Travel:

| Purpose of Travel | Location | Rate | Cost |
|-----------------------|----------|----------------------------|----------|
| Mileage Reimbursement | Local | \$100 /Mo X 1.50 FTEs X 12 | \$ 1,800 |
| | | | |
| | | TOTAL | \$ 1,800 |

Travel: \$ 1,800

D. Supplies:

| Items | Rate | Cost |
|-------------------------|-------|----------|
| General office supplies | | \$ 1,500 |
| Postage | | \$ 100 |
| | | \$ - |
| | | \$ - |
| | | |
| | TOTAL | \$ 1,600 |

Supplies: \$ 1,600

E. Equipment:

| Type of Equip | Rate | Cost |
|-------------------|--|----------|
| Computer purchase | \$650 each X 2 includes taxes, softwares, & licenses | \$ 1,300 |
| Printer purchase | \$250.00 each X 2 includes taxes | \$ 500 |
| | | \$ - |
| | | \$ - |
| | TOTAL | \$ 1,800 |

Equipment: \$ 1,800

**ALMA FAMILY SERVICES
CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION
12-MONTH BUDGET**

F. Other:

| Item | Rate | Cost |
|----------------------------------|--|-----------|
| Recruitment | \$35/ea x 2 times | \$ 70 |
| Payroll processing (ADP) | \$7.5 per Bi-weekly X 26 | \$ 195 |
| Training & Educational Materials | \$1500 annually | \$ 1,500 |
| Equipment leases/repairs | \$35/mo for copier/fax | \$ 420 |
| Telephone | \$25/mo basic phone + 2 Cellular @ \$75/mo plus taxes | \$ 1,200 |
| Rent | \$1.75 sqft X 150 X 12 mos | \$ 3,150 |
| Utilities | \$50 per month for electricity, gas, & water X 12 mos | \$ 600 |
| Janitorial Services | \$35 per month for janitorial services & supplies X 12 mos | \$ 420 |
| Insurance (General & Prof) | \$75 per month for professional & general liability X 12 mos | \$ 900 |
| Internet access costs | \$65 DSL and taxes X 12 mos | \$ 780 |
| IT Consultant | \$50/mo X 12 | \$ 600 |
| Conference & Training | \$200 training related costs per clinical staff X 2 | \$ 400 |
| Other Misc. | \$125 for membership dues, taxes, & others | \$ 125 |
| TOTAL | | \$ 10,360 |

Other: \$ 10,360

G. Indirect Cost:

\$ 86,956

Alma Family Services has 15.0% of administrative overhead cost

\$ 13,044

Indirect Cost: \$ 13,044

BUDGET SUMMARY

| Category | Total |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Personnel | \$ 60,250 |
| Fringe Benefits | \$ 11,146 |
| Travel | \$ 1,800 |
| Supplies | \$ 1,600 |
| Equipment | \$ 1,800 |
| Other | \$ 10,360 |
| Total Direct Costs | \$ 86,956 |
| Indirect Costs | \$ 13,044 |
| Total Project Costs | \$ 100,000 |

***TOTAL DIRECT COSTS:**

Funding Request: \$ 86,956

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS:

Funding Request: \$ 100,000